**VCE Global Politics   
(Units 3 and 4: 2018–2024)**

School-based assessment report

GENERAL COMMENTS

This report provides advice for the first year of implementation of the [VCE Global Politics Study Design 2018–2024](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/politics/AustGlobalPoliticsSD_2018.pdf). Schools delivering Global Politics must ensure that School-assessed Coursework (SAC) for Units 3 and 4 complies with the reaccredited VCE Global Politics Study Design and the VCE assessment principles.

Support materials for VCE Units 3 and 4 Global Politics can be located on the VCE study page for VCE Global Politics on the VCAA’s website. Alongside the study design, other highly recommended documents for VCE Global Politics teachers to access and consider when developing a learning program for Units 3 and 4 include the *Advice for teachers*, Frequently Asked Questions, Examination Specifications (Version 2, March 2018) and the Sample written examination (March 2018).

Schools delivering Units 3 and 4 of VCE Global Politics that were audited in the 2018 School-based Assessment Audit indicated that they used a range of resources and support materials to develop and set tasks for both Unit 3 and 4. These included:

* [VCE Australian and Global Politics (Units 1 and 2: 2018–2023; Units 3 and 4: 2018–2024)](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/studies/auspolitics/auspoliticsindex.aspx)
* [*Frequently Asked Questions*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/politics/FAQ_Australian%20and%20Global%20Politics%20.docx)
* [*Advice for teachers*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/adviceforteachers/ausglobalpolitics/introduction.aspx)
* Textbooks
* professional networks
* subject associations
* relevant media/news items.

When designing a SAC task, the task must adhere to the VCE assessment principles and the requirements of the VCE study design. Submissions received in School-based Assessment Audit are reviewed according to these principles. Overall, the audit highlighted that schools are doing this well.

Schools audited for VCE Global Politics submitted evidence of school-based assessment practices that ranged from:

* Evidence deemed to be exemplary, demonstrating a clear understanding of the VCE assessment principles and the requirements of the current study design.
* VCAA assessment standards and requirements being met adequately.
* Evidence and responses where minor errors were detected or certain aspects of the VCAA assessment standards and requirements were not originally being met, requiring submission of further evidence.

The audit of Unit 3 Global Politics indicated that most SAC tasks that did not meet VCAA requirements did not meet the VCE assessment principles of *Validity* and *Authentication*. For Unit 4, comments and feedback provided by the Audit Panel concerned both Outcomes 1 and 2 and were in relation to the VCE assessment principles of *Validity,* *Efficiency* and *Authentication.*

**Authentication**

The Audit Panel made recommendations to schools for further modification and adaptation procedures to be put in place:

* Schools must have clear and detailed information regarding their authentication strategies, with arrangements put in place if there is not sufficient evidence for authentication of student work for SAC tasks.
* Where a SAC task is being delivered across multiple classes of the same VCE study, schools should minimise the time between classes. Where this is not possible, the SAC task must be modified for each class to ensure student work can be authenticated. The school must ensure that the SAC task is carried out equitably and that each SAC task is comparable in scope and demand.
* It is vital that commercially produced tasks used for school-based assessment are modified to ensure authentication of student work. Schools adhere to different assessment timelines, therefore when other schools use the same commercially produced tasks, answers could be in the public domain and be easily accessible to students. It is also important that commercially produced tasks are checked against the VCE study design and the VCE assessment principlesto ensure they meet current requirements. Teachers should avoid recycling SAC tasks from previous years in order to ensure that information is contemporary and to ensure authentication of student work.
* It is vital that schools ensure that structured questions and essays align with the demands of the current study design, especially when drawing on previous examination questions.

Feedback provided to some schools on their audit submissions recommended that more information be included in future regarding the planned task/s for Unit 4, Outcome 2. This allows the Audit Panel to adequately assess that all key knowledge and key skills are being drawn on and ensures students can show satisfactory completion of the outcome.

**Validity**

Schools are encouraged to provide greater detail explaining how their SAC task/s fulfils the outcomes, key knowledge and key skills of the study.

The task must be achievable for all students and allow students to demonstrate their highest level of ability. When developing questions for a SAC, consider:

* 25% should be lower order questions, such as: list, identify and/or describe
* 50% should be mid-range questions, including: explore, compare and explain
* 25% should be higher order, including: analyse, evaluate, to what extent?

The key knowledge in Units 3 and 4 includes key terms and concepts that must be explicitly taught and applied. The *Advice for teachers* provides a glossary of these key terms, however these terms are not limited to the provided definitions and should be considered within the context of applying them to examples and case studies.

Common areas of misunderstanding or weakness were identified for some tasks, including:

* Some language/terminology being used did not align with the key knowledge and key skills as they appear in the 2018–2024 VCE Global Politics Study Design. Terminology from older/previous versions of the study design was being used in SAC tasks.
* For Unit 3, the outcome being used did not correctly align with the outcome in the 2018–2024 VCE Global Politics Study Design.
* For Unit 3, certain questions did not align with the 10 year timeframe for case studies and examples under the 2018–2024 VCE Global Politics Study Design.

It was apparent that teachers are successfully applying theoretical concepts in the study design to contemporary political examples and case studies. It is important that teachers adhere to the 10 year timeframe for case studies and examples in VCE Global Politics. Further clarification on this can be found in the *Frequently Asked Questions.*

The audit found that for both Outcomes 1 and 2 in Unit 3 and 4, a limited range of SAC task types were being used, developing what was in effect, ‘mini’ end-of-year-examination style tasks. There was a heavy emphasis on summative tasks focusing on short-answer questions and essays at the end of an area of study, conducted under examination-style, silent, timed-writing conditions.

Whilst both short-answer questions and essays are valid task types, the VCAA encourages schools to use a variety of task types as part of school-based assessment. This allows students to develop a range of skills and provides opportunities for students to experience success beyond the parameters of silent, examination-style, timed-writing, summative tasks.

**Efficiency (relating to Unit 4)**

Teachers are encouraged to include a cover sheet that includes all the conditions under which the SAC is conducted including reading and writing time. The audit found that some SAC tasks were too time-intensive creating undue workload.

Schools should note that for an in-class, timed-writing SAC task, the duration should not exceed 90 minutes. Tasks above 90 minutes could generate undue stress on students.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

Unit 3: Global actors

Outcome 1

*Evaluate the power of key global actors and assess the extent to which they achieve their aims and are able to challenge state sovereignty.*

**Task type options**

Select one or more of the following:

* a multimedia presentation
* a case study
* an essay
* a report
* short-answer questions
* an extended response.

Overall, the key knowledge and key skills for Unit 3: Global actors, Area of Study 1: Global actors were covered well.

Schools delivering Units 3 and 4 Global Politics should note that for students to demonstrate satisfactory completion of a unit, they must be able to meet the demands of the outcome which draws on the key knowledge and key skills of an area of study. These requirements are detailed in the current study design and should be used in program planning, resourcing, and assessment formulation and implementation.

Assessment

Most Unit 3 SAC tasks for Outcome 1 used VCAA performance descriptors. In addition, the weightings applied to Outcome 1 tasks for the most part, appropriately reflected the depth, complexity or detail of the key knowledge and key skills as required.

Issues that arose regarding Outcome 1 were related to the SAC task not correctly aligning with the 2018–2024 VCE Global Politics Study Design:

* The correct phrasing of the current Unit 3 Outcome 1.
* The correct language/terminology associated with specific key knowledge and key skills from the current study design.
* Adhering to the 10 year timeframe, with short answer and essay questions asking students to discuss a global actor within the timeframe of “the 21st Century”, as opposed to the current study design requirements: “*VCE Global Politics is a contemporary study and focus must be on examples and case studies from within the last 10 years.*” (Pg. 30).

Outcome 2

*Analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the use of various types of power by a specific Asia-Pacific state in pursuit of its national interests.*

**Task type options**

Select one or more of the following:

* a multimedia presentation
* a case study
* an essay
* a report
* short-answer questions
* an extended response.

The key knowledge and key skills for Unit 3: Global actors, Area of Study 2: Power in the Asia-Pacific were covered well.

Assessment

As with Outcome 1, most Unit 3 SAC tasks for Outcome 2 drew on VCAA performance descriptors. In addition, the weightings applied to the Outcome 2 SAC tasks, for the most part, appropriately reflected the depth, complexity or detail required.

Where issues arose with Outcome 2 SAC tasks, these were related to the VCE assessment principles of *Authentication* and *Validity*.

* Authentication: a small percentage of schools were required to provide more information detailing their authentication strategies when using commercially produced tasks in order to establish that authentication requirements were being met.
* Valid: some short-answer questions and essay options required students to frame their entire responses within the context of the Asia-Pacific region. Schools should note that for Outcome 2, the various types of power and the main foreign policy instruments used by the Asia-Pacific state must allow students to explore and undertake a more global focus when examining the national interests of national security, economic prosperity and international standing. The only exception is the national interest of regional relationships. The types of power and the main foreign policy instruments of the national interest of regional relationships must apply only to the Asia-Pacific region as stated on page 32 of the 2018–2024 VCE Global Politics Study Design.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

Unit 4: Global challenges

Outcome 1

*Analyse the debates relating to TWO global ethical issues, and evaluate the effectiveness of global actors’ responses to these issues.*

**Task type options**

Select one or more of the following:

* a multimedia presentation
* a case study
* an essay
* a report
* short-answer questions
* an extended response.

Overall, the key knowledge and key skills for Unit 4: Global challenges were covered well.

Assessment

Most Unit 4 SAC tasks for Outcome 1 drew on the VCAA performance descriptors. In addition, the weightings applied to Outcome 1 SAC tasks, for the most part, appropriately reflected the depth, complexity or detail of the key knowledge and key skills as required.

Comments and feedback to schools provided by the Audit Panel focused on the use of accurate terminology as per the VCE study design, specifically:

* *A School-assessed Coursework question that mentions “…the 21st century”.*

The phrase “the 21st century” may cause some confusion to students, in light of the 10 year timeframe for case studies and examples. SAC task questions should align with this timeframe (see page 34 of the study design).

* *A School-assessed Coursework question with multiple parts shifted between the use of “international treaty” and then to “international law”.*

The lack of consistency may cause confusion to students, in light of the emphasis on “international law”. SAC task questions should align with the current study design introduction for Unit 4 Area of Study 1 (pg. 34) and Australian and Global Politics *Frequently Asked Questions* document (pg. 3) that stipulate what international law encompasses in terms of rules in international relations.

Outcome 2

*Analyse TWO contemporary global crises and evaluate the effectiveness of global actors’ responses to these.*

**Task type options**

Select one or more of the following:

* a multimedia presentation
* a case study
* an essay
* a report
* short-answer questions
* an extended response.

Assessment

Most SAC tasks in Unit 4, Outcome 2 drew on VCAA performance descriptors. The weightings applied to Outcome 2 SAC tasks, for the most part, appropriately reflected the depth, complexity or detail required.

Comments and feedback to schools provided by the Audit Panel focused on the use of accurate terminology as per the VCE study design, specifically:

* *School-assessed Coursework question that asked students to evaluate the causes of one of the following crises “environmental degradation”, “interstate conflict” and “non-state terrorism”.*

This terminology does not align with the current study design. The global crises for students to investigate as per the current study design are: Climate Change, Armed Conflict, Terrorism and Economic Instability. (Study Design, pp. 36–37)